

STAFF REPORT: NOVEMBER 16, 2022 MEETING

PREPARED BY: J. ROSS

ADDRESS: 3740 SECOND AVENUE

HISTORIC DISTRICT: ADJACENT TO WILLIS SELDEN HISTORIC DISTRICT

OWNER: GREATWATER CAPITAL

SPONSORING CITY AGENCY/AUTHORITY: DETROIT ECONOMIC GROWTH CORPORATION (DEGC)

DATE OF PROVISIONALLY COMPLETE APPLICATION: 10/14/2022

DATE OF STAFF SITE VISIT: 10/31/2022

SCOPE OF WORK: ERECT BUILDING (ADVISORY OPINION PER SECTION 21-2-5)

EXISTING CONDITIONS

The project area/parcel includes two raised multi-panel solar panel arrays within the southern portion of the lot and a paved parking area towards the lot's northern end. A 6'-0" chain-link fence encloses the property. The building directly to the east of 3740 Second Street, within the Willis Selden Historic District boundaries, is addressed at 496 Brainard Street. The historic resource at 496 Brainard is Georgian Revival style, 4-story, multi-family building which is clad with red brick. The building was erected ca. 1915.



3740 Second, existing conditions (staff photo). The building to the right, 496 Brainard, is located within the Willis-Selden Historic District

PROPOSAL

The development team/owner proposes to erect a new building at 3740 Second per the following narrative:

3740 Second Avenue is a 4-story mixed-use new construction development at the corner of 2nd Ave and Brainard St. This new construction development will create 57 residential studio and one-bedroom units

and 3,000 SqFt of commercial space to be used for added amenities for the residents and surrounding community. 20% of the residential units are income restricted for residents making 80% AMI or below and the remaining units are below 120% AMI to create workforce housing.

Note that the project includes the erection of a new building and the establishment of a new paved parking lot, which will be located to the east of the new apartment building, directly adjacent to the district's western boundary.

STAFF OBSERVATIONS AND RESEARCH

- As previously noted, the current proposal is not an application for work within the Willis Selden Historic District. Rather, the submission outlines a proposal for work at the parcel which is directly adjacent to/to the west of the historic district. The development team is seeking a Neighborhood Enterprise Zone District exemption for the development of residential housing located within eligible distressed communities to support the rehabilitation of the property. The sponsoring city authority, the Detroit Economic Growth Corporation, is therefore seeking the Commission's comment re: if the project might have a beneficial or adverse effect on the adjacent Willis Selden Historic District.
- The project proposes to erect a new building which is generally consistent with the adjacent/nearby buildings within the historic district in re: material, scale, setback, and form. The project also proposes to establish a new paved parking lot within the parcel boundaries. It is staff's opinion that the new development project will not adversely impact the adjacent historic district.

ISSUES/COMMISSION ACTION

The Commission is asked to provide comment under Section 21-2-5 of the 2019 Detroit City Code, as outlined below. Section 21-2-5, Effects of projects on districts. The Commission is requested to make a finding concerning the "demonstrable effects of the proposed project and report same to the Mayor and City Council." The intent of this section is to provide guidance to city government prior to committing to a particular course of action, under the following requirement: A City-financed, licensed, permitted, authorized or contracted physical development project shall be considered to have a demonstrable effect on a designated or proposed historic district when any condition of the project creates a change, beneficial or adverse, in the quality of the historical, architectural, archeological, engineering, social or cultural significance that qualified the property for designation as an historic district or that may qualify the property for designation as an historic district. Generally, adverse effects occur under conditions which include:

- (1) Destruction or alteration of all or part of a resource;
- (2) Isolation from or alteration of the surrounding environment of a resource;
- (3) Introduction of visual, audible, or atmospheric elements that are out of character with the resource and its setting;
- (4) Transfer or sale of a City-owned resource without adequate conditions or restrictions regarding preservation, maintenance, or use; and
- (5) Neglect of a resource resulting in its deterioration or destruction

As it appears that none of the five above-listed conditions are likely to occur as a result of the project, it is staff's opinion that the new development will not adversely impact the adjacent historic district.



3740 Second, current conditions (staff photos)